

REMARKS

A. Introduction

In this Office Action, claims 1-34 are noted as pending, claims 8-10, 18-20 and 28-30 are noted as allowable, and claims 1-7, 11-17, 21-27 and 31-34 are rejected.

In response the Specification is amended to a minor extent, independent claims 1, 11 and 21 are amended, and remarks are provided.

B. Rejection of Claims 1-7, 11-17, and 21-27 Under 35 U.S.C. §102

These claims have been rejected as being anticipated by Wagner et al. (WO 98/27382).

In response thereto, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention, as recited by these claims, as amended herein, was not anticipated by the cited prior art for the following reasons.

Wagner, et al. shows prisms 17 having, as noted by the Examiner, only "a first flank face directed to one of the two horizontal incidence end faces and a second flank face opposite the first flank face." See particularly the views of the prisms 17 in Figs. 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, and 4.2-4.4.

The present invention uses, in addition to flank faces, a flat top face as shown by, e.g., reference numerals 3G or 13G. See, e.g. Figs. 2 to 4 and paragraphs 148, 71-72, 74, 83-85 and 97. As described and shown therein, the flat top face helps cause inside light to escape the light guide plate after being inner-reflected by a corresponding second flank face 3F or 13EB.

Independent claims 1, 11 and 21 have been amended herein to recite that each of the ridges provided on the emission function face of the light guide plate has a flat top face in addition to first and second flank faces.

Wagner et al. fails to disclose this structure and the above-mentioned resulting optical function achieved thereby. Wagner et al.'s structure causes inside light to escape the light guide plate only through the flank faces. Therefore the light paths are quite different from those of the present invention.

C. Rejection of Claims 31-34 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

These claims are rejected as being made obvious by the Wagner et al. reference discussed above.

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Regardless of any teaching of a light source, as discussed above, Wagner et al. lacks any disclosure or teaching of, in addition to the flank faces, a flat top face on the emission function face for improved light emission.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-34 are now in condition for allowance.

If there are any additional fees associated with this Response, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

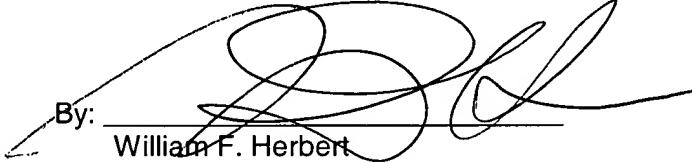
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this Response, the undersigned would appreciate a telephone conference with the Examiner to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)

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on January 12, 2004

STAAS & HALSEY

By: Caprice Polavan

Date: January 12, 2004